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AUTHOR Keener, Catherine D.
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of a study that examined leadership among staff members in a suburban Cincinnati (Ohio) junior/senior high school that was undergoing school restructuring. The research examined principal-staff communication, with a focus on the staff decision-making role. The school was participating in both the Goodlad Institute of Educational Renewal and the Coalition of Essential Schools. Data were collected through interviews with the design team (eight high school teachers and one principal) and observation of design-team meetings. Two voices emerged in the findings: the voice of the teachers and the voice of the administrator. The teachers responded primarily with silent resistance. The design-team members lacked a vision of the school's future direction, did not understand their leadership roles and responsibilities, and were unaware of the voices of other members of the school community. The principal had a clear sense of both vision and purpose. It is recommended that the principal develop a greater sense of community by enlarging the conversation and including the voices of all school-community members. The school vision must be shared and staff goals understood by all. (LMI)

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**A Study of Emerging Leadership
in a Junior/Senior High School**

by
Catherine D. Keener
Miami University
Oxford, OH

October, 1995

**Paper presented at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association
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Abstract

Does leadership emerge among staff members in a suburban junior/senior high school undergoing restructuring efforts? Data were collected from design team members and the school principal during observations of teacher inservice day meetings, in design team meetings as well as from individual semi-structured interviews.

Two voices emerged in this study: the voice of the teachers and the voice of the administrator. The voice of the teacher was primarily one of silent resistance. The voice of the administrator was one of understanding.

It is concluded that the restructuring efforts will not be effective until there is a single common voice that represents a shared vision.

A Study of Emerging Leadership in a Junior/Senior High School

Overview

This paper reports on a study of restructuring and leadership. The selected school, a Junior/Senior High School in a suburban area of Cincinnati, is a participant in both the Goodlad Institute of Educational Renewal and Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools. The Institute of Educational Renewal consists of a community of partner schools under the leadership of Miami University for the purpose of exercising shared responsibility for the learning, development and well-being of children, youth and families. The Coalition of Essential Schools, a high school-university partnership, works to redesign the high school for better student learning and achievement.

Until school restructuring, principals had all the decision-making power in schools, as well as all the responsibility. Hallinger & Hausman (1993) initiated a case study to evaluate the changing principal's role during school restructuring. Results of their study concluded that ultimate accountability in the decision-making role did not shift from the principal to others. In this study, I looked at teachers as emerging leaders. Also viewed were the relationships between the principal and the design team members. Their communication concerning shared vision, commitment and accountability were of special interest.

This study made two major assumptions. First, the school staff, as members of

Goodlad's Institute andSizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, had sought a vehicle for change. Second, the school staff had a shared vision and commitment to change.

I was interested in finding out more about leadership social relationships. Specifically, my interest was one describing the relationships between the principal and staff during restructuring efforts. I hoped to learn more about how they communicate with one another during the restructuring process. I also wanted to describe the decision-making roles that staff members assume during restructuring. Finally, I was interested in evaluating the impact that shared vision, commitment, and accountability have on the teacher team and restructuring efforts.

Method

Site Selection:

Since this study involved emerging leadership during restructuring, it was necessary for the site participants to have declared their intentions of restructuring. This school community appeared committed to restructuring since they had become members of both Goodlad's Institute andSizer's Coalition of Essential Schools. In addition, they had applied for and been awarded a Venture Capital Grant from the Ohio Department of Education. This award will bring \$125,000 to this Junior/Senior High School over a five-year period for professional development and restructuring efforts.

The school was located in a suburban community on the eastern boundary of Cincinnati. With five hundred fifty (550) students, Grades 7-12, this school remained the only junior/

senior high school in a district populated by nine thousand (9,000). The community was 98% Caucasian and 2% minority. As the high school offered predominantly college preparatory courses, some students attended vocational courses at an off-site regional vocational center.

Participant Selection:

The Design Team was formed in September, 1994, and was composed of nine (9) members - eight (8) high school teachers and the school principal. Three (3) of the team members were the Department Chairs of Math, English, Science. The school counselor also was on the team. Four(4) of the team members were female, while the other five (5) were male. This team met on a weekly basis to discuss the restructuring of the high school.

Data Gathering:

The data were collected through observations in the school of two (2) staff inservices, five (5) Design Team Meetings, and from semi-structured individual interviews of eight (8) of the Design Team members. The observations were made over four (4) months during the school day and totaled twenty-five (25) hours.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in staff classrooms or offices in the school building. All interviews were approximately thirty (30) minutes in length and individual. Initially, I was interested in observing emerging leadership through evidence of role changes by the principal and teachers during school restructuring efforts. A secondary purpose began to emerge through the observations as I became interested in understanding

the design team's perceptions of shared vision and commitment as well as their communication within the school community. The reader will note the addition of some leading questions in **Theme 2: Team Positives**. Though taken out of the interview context and not found in Appendix A, these questions were part of an emerging pattern of the questioning process. Notes were taken during the first three interviews by the researcher. The final five (5) were both hand scripted and tape-recorded with the knowledge and permission of each participant. The audio tapes were transcribed by the researcher so that the participants' words might be captured in written form. Patterns emerged as the researcher attempted to confirm team members' comments through other sources, i.e. other participants or through observations.

Trustworthiness was measured through validation among observations and interviews. Saturation occurred particularly in the area of the collective team member voice. For example, when confusion existed, there appeared to be confusion among all members. Perceptions of team positives and administrative support was unanimous.

Analysis and Results:

The researcher analyzed the data through the contextualization of thinking units, general categories, in the areas of meanings and relationships. Conceptual textual segments (CTS), segments of text that, as isolated text, have conceptual meaning, were underlined and identified including: team formation, member responsibilities, length of time the team would continue, strengths and negatives of team membership, staff goals, administrative goals, community goals, silence, and fear of turbulence. These were then grouped under the identified categories: vision - team formation, member responsibilities, and length of

time team would continue, team member reflections - strengths and negatives, goals - staff, administrative, and community, and silence as resistance - silence and fear of turbulence.

Thematic Analysis

Part 1: Thematic Overview

Specific themes emerged through the observations and interviews with the team members and the principal. In **Theme 1: Confusion on Shared Vision**, the principal and team members' perceptions of the change process' goals emerged. There appeared from the team's perspective to be an unclear understanding of where they were going and what the necessary steps would be to take them there. They did appear to feel a sense of pride in being on the leading edge of change, though they did not appear to be able to identify what specifically that change would mean to them or to the school. Design team members spoke of how the team was formed, their responsibilities on the team, as well as the length of time the design team would continue. Team language often revealed discomfort with their new roles.

The principal, in contrast to the design team members, articulated clear reasons for the selection of each design team member, a clear sense of vision and the length of time that the design team would continue in the school.

Theme 2: Team Positives included the strengths of being a member of the design team and the change process. They spoke of the benefits that dialogue and listening to other

team members gave them. The principal expressed many of the same strengths as those of the design team members. This theme revealed an enthusiasm and hope for the future as a group.

In **Theme 3: Team Negatives**, the team members referred to outside influences rather than to the members of the team. Specifically, team members described negative experiences with staff members including both staff actions and perceived staff feelings concerning the team and the changes they might initiate. The principal, on the other hand, articulated actions and feelings of the larger school community.

Theme 4: Staff Goals included design team members' perceptions of how the staff was approaching the change process and what the staff vision would entail. Their perceptions indicated that team members did not have a clear understanding of either how the staff felt or what direction staff wished to take in restructuring. Though most perceptions were negative, they were not substantive. In contrast, the principal appeared to have a clear understanding of staff support, including rough percentages of support and opposition, and the reasons for each.

In **Theme 5: Administrative Goals**, design team members discussed the principal's and superintendent's goals and vision for the school. Here team members appeared to be more positive and clear by referring to both as supportive of team restructuring efforts. The principal supported the design team's understanding by expressing overwhelming support including specific examples.

Theme 6: Community Goals included the design team members' perceptions of the

community's wishes for the future direction of the school. Design team members spoke with a collective voice concerning the community, though most declared that they only came into contact with the parents and never attended Board of Education meetings. The principal's perception aligned closely with that of the team members. He, however, adopted a more extensive outlook and expressed insight into the community view.

Theme 7: Silence as Resistance dealt with communication within this school community. Silence seemed to be the underlying theme throughout this study, and appeared to be understood and used by all participants to show resistance. An overall fear of school/district turbulence appeared to influence all participants to put forth an appearance of progress and harmony, while failing to address key issues.

Part 2: Description of Results

Participant names have been omitted in the description of this study in order to maintain the anonymity promised during the interviewing process. The following description of this study will reflect participants as R, meaning Respondent 1 through Respondent 8, while the letters "IN" will refer to Interviewer, and "PR" will refer to the Principal.

Theme 1: Confusion on Shared Vision

Though each design team member was chosen by the principal, there appeared to be confusion as to why each was selected.

IN: How did you get on the design team?

R7: I just was asked. I live in this community and have children who attend this school district. Maybe that had something to do with it.

R4: I don't know why I was chosen over the others to be part of this team. But, I'm happy about it.

Design team members seemed unclear as to what the design team is supposed to do, particularly when asked about the role of the design team.

IN: What is the role of the design team?

R8: I'm not sure. Last year we were faced from the Board with more students and no hires. So, we wanted to work together to solve this situation - in working with the Coalition and "back to basics."

Discussion regarding how long the design team efforts would continue appeared to be sketchy by participants.

IN: How long do you anticipate the design team to continue?

R2: I have a feeling that we might continue to have a team such as this as a permanent kind of thing just to be like an advisory group to the principal, but I'm not positive. We need to continually look at what we're doing and options.

R5: It may be disbanded at the end of the year.

The principal, however, articulated clearly why each team member was chosen, a vision, and the length of time that the design team will continue.

IN: How did you select the design team?

PR: The design team is made up, basically, of all the disciplines. The four curriculum coordinators are there. . . . So, the composition of the group, hopefully, represents all of the factions of the school.

IN: What is the goal of the design team?

PR: The goal of the design team was to come up with a long-range plan for Grades 9-10-11-12. The plan dealt with the structure of the high school. That was the plan. We were trying to see how we could incorporate these into the plan for the high school and we got eight out of the twelve on the original list.

IN: So the design team will continue?

PR: Yes, definitely. Absolutely. I think the design team will honestly continue to work. I think they believe in what we're doing. I think they are also smart enough politically, and through some coaching by me, they realize that we'd better slow down and do some legwork and ease into this thing at the high school.

A team cannot develop plans for the future if members do not have a clear shared vision. Though eager to participate in change efforts, the design team did not appear to understand collectively why they were chosen, where they were going, or how long they would be a unit. The principal had a clear vision, yet it had not been clearly shared with the team. Rather than a shared vision, they expressed separate visions.

Theme 2: Team Positives

Positive team member perceptions concerning the team experience focused on the internal workings of the team. Team members spoke of personal growth and group involvement.

IN: What have been the benefits of being on the design team for you?

R4: My personal growth - I have come to know the faculty and definitely it has given me a different perspective.

IN: What has been the best part about being on the design team?

R1: What we've been doing step-by-step. The original plan was initiated by teachers - the entire process was a team of teachers. The design team is just another way of involving those other than administrators. I guess, in answer to your question, teacher involvement.

The principal expressed many of the same positive reasons, yet in more detail and centered on staff members.

IN: What have you liked about this change process?

PR: The enthusiasm that's been created. When I came here, most of them were middle age in their career - end of their career, whatever. Good staff. They didn't have a lot of enthusiasm, but just working with them in the last three years (since the change process began), they're just absolutely excited about what they're doing. They like coming to work. They don't mind going to meetings. I think they feel more professional because they have a say in what they're doing. So, they're much more in control of their profession. I think they like being recognized which they have been professionally. I'm excited for them.

Team experiences may offer a supportive atmosphere which allows members to grow

personally as well as within the team. The support felt from group collegiality was the most often mentioned benefit to their design team role. This feeling of group unity leads to building a collaborative environment.

Theme 3: Team Negatives

Negative team member perceptions referred to those forces external to the team. These forces appeared to revolve around the accountability issue of the role and included negative feelings team members had experienced both in team decision-making as well as caused by the reactions of other staff members. Team members expressed negative feelings toward accountability during the interviews.

IN: What about the restructuring efforts have you disliked?

R8: Decision-making. In some ways, I would want to stop here. I don't want to make any more decisions. I can go back into my classroom and get away from them. This has been tough. After the staff meeting, particularly, the design team felt a lot of tension. There was a lot of tension.

IN: And the part which has not been as enjoyable?

R7: The frustrating part is when it is misunderstood by people. When you get comments like, "Well, they have already decided what they are going to do and this is all show." When, in fact, you know that you've been in the meeting. And that is bizarre, you know, when nothing has been decided.

Frustration was also expressed by team members in the design team meetings:

R7: I am so frustrated with the process that I've considered getting off the design team and not fight it. Just keep it the way it is. But then I thought - they're not thinking about kids. So, I'm going to stay and fight as hard as possible.

R1: The hell with the rest of the staff. We can ask them one hundred times. Then we get what "I want."

R4: In private industry, if the boss says, "I'm gonna change this," then . . .

R1: That's the difference between us and them.

The principal indicated that the larger school community influenced negatives in the

change process. He also displayed an ability to empathize with this larger community.

IN: How about the negatives concerning change?

PR: Somehow we got into trouble with some people in town. This is a very conservative town, and we're doing great, and their houses are worth a lot of money because of the schools and they don't want us to change. Flat out - they don't want us to change it. I guess they would rather we wait and see if we drop and whatever, credibility and test scores or whatever, and then change it. And, maybe if I were sitting in their shoes and thinking, "Gee, I spent all this money on this house and I'm paying twice for this house than I would if I were in another district." You know, fooling around with change in the school? It becomes an economic issue.

The principal addressed his approach towards accountability regarding decision-making while discussing his goals.

IN: How do you think you got to that point (initiating and developing the change process)?

PR: They (staff) are willing to experiment because they've seen that, even though we've been under fire at different times, everyone has backed the movement. The Board has said slow down, but no one has said stop. I also think that the person who is leading the school needs to step out on a limb and take most of the flack which I did. You know if you really believe in what you're doing, then you've got to be able to show your teachers that you're willing to take the bullets with them, and you'd better take about half of them so that they don't get discouraged. You have to do that because you can't put your staff out in front and then say, "You shouldn't have done that." Then, they'll never do anything.

Group accountability and commitment to the process appeared to be a key factor in decision-making. While the principal has developed an appreciation of that role, team members seemed to be unsure and fearful. Perhaps sensing sessions led by the principal should be offered to better prepare team members for potential group reactions and the design team responses in order to deal more effectively with accountability in the decision-making role.

Theme 4: Staff Goals

Team members appeared not able to sense staff support for the design team or the change process.

IN: Tell me about the staff goals and how they view change.

R4: Change is painful and they don't want to go through this pain. So they want to go on with their own business. They say, "I'm teaching four classes. Don't touch me."

IN: How do staff members feel about change?

R7: Some are gung-ho, and some are, "I don't care - I don't want to change." They want to do it the way they have always done it.

The principal, without hesitation, articulated his perception of staff support and expressed commitment toward future possibilities for the continuation of change.

IN: How does the staff feel (about change)?

PR: The staff, being very honest, 80% support it, 20% holding their ground because they like what they're doing. Some of them have used the same damn dittos for twenty years and they don't want to change them. But this isn't any different than any school. Basically, because of some self-interest, there are people who are resisting it. However, when I put all those leaders on the design team, and that design team leans toward restructuring, and I've already got the junior high 9th Grade into that mode, there aren't too many left. So, if I were to take another count, I've got it lined up so I've got them outnumbered big time.

Team members expressed general feelings about staff goals, however seemed unclear about what specific changes staff desired. The design team members appeared to have developed a stereotype of other staff members. The principal, though, did not get weighed down by concerns of individual staff support. He appeared to feel certain that the number of those involved staff would create the critical mass to ensure total staff support.

Theme 5: Administrative Goals

Team members, while lacking specificity on administrative goals, appeared more positive in their perceptions of administrative members and their support for the design team in general. Design team members were questioned about principal support.

IN: Is the design team of one mind in terms of the goals?

R7: I think so. Obviously to different degrees, but I think so.

IN: And the principal?

R7: Yep!

Design team members were also questioned about the superintendent's goals.

IN: What are the goals of the superintendent?

R7: I know he rewards, admires intelligent risk-taking. He said that. And, I believe he does. He seems to be an intelligent man. He seems well-read, and I think he cares about kids a lot.

When questioned about his goals for the school, the principal reinforced their perceptions of his support for change.

IN: How about your goals?

PR: My goal is to continue pushing because I think it's right for this school. I think we're probably right now one of the top schools in the state and we just need to continue to do what's best for kids. You know, we may get some flack but I think it's right. Sometimes I'm amazed honestly at how far we've come in such a short period. This is our fourth year in this process and we've done a lot in a short period of time. The major part to me that's changed that no one really sees is the change of thinking of people here as opposed to the very traditional way it used to be. Now, a lot of them think of student as worker and the Coalition Principles.

The principal echoed the team view regarding the superintendent.

IN: And the superintendent?

PR: The superintendent is supportive. He believes in everything we are doing. He also took flack obviously. The biggest benefit to me is he let me alone - he didn't look over my shoulder. He trusted me and let me go.

From their words, team members indicated that the principal has more of a vested interest with the change process and the design team. The principal, himself, seemed willing to

engage in the struggle for change. While there seemed to be more of a connection with the principal and the team, all appeared to value the superintendent's support.

Theme 6: Community Goals

Team members appeared unanimous in their perception of community goals. They all agreed that test results were most important to this community.

IN: What does the community want?

R4: The community wants improvement. How will they know? Achievement - SAT, ACT, Proficiency Test scores. They want good test scores. If the test scores are down, then there are problems.

Participants expressed concern about small groups of vocal community members who show up at Board Meetings and get what they want.

R2: It takes only a small group of very vocal people who happen to come out of the woodwork to constantly keep drathering at things they're concerned of and other people hear it, worry, and wonder.

Referring to the community as a conservative one, team members discussed how the community viewed the district's schools.

IN: What are the goals of the community?

R7: They want equality - a traditional kind of education. The trouble with being good is that while we are good, why don't we just hold onto what we have? I think they fail to see that at one time all these inner city schools were good, too. The schools that are bad were once good schools. And perhaps they were good schools that didn't change. You know, they failed to keep up. And we are dealing with that, too. Wouldn't it be nice if we all had loving, two-parent family homes? Or wouldn't it be nice if we didn't have to educate children who didn't want to learn, or those with health or chemical (dependency) problems? I guess people want for their kids what they had. I had so-and-so in the Second Grade and we sat in straight rows and did work sheets and I turned out just fine. Why would we want to change things and make them worse?

The principal's words reinforced the perceptions of the design team members.

IN: Tell me about the community.

PR: It is very conservative. They want us to be a good school. But to them the proof-of-the-pudding is the standardized test scores and even though we say, "That's not the only . . .," they realize that, but they say that's what the town measures us on. We have this track record that we continue to have these high scores with what we bring. They are so programmed into what they see in the paper about Proficiencies and where they rank. Thank God we've been the top one or two. If we ever get out of the top six or seven, the calls will get ugly like, "You screwed it up. You changed the thing and you screwed it up." As principal, if your scores go down, you've got to be able to stand up because you're going to get it. I'm scared to death every time my scores come in.

This middle has seemed to successfully weathered change through the years. Their perceived definition of success has been high test scores. It appears, on the surface, that changes might be made if the community has the guarantee that test scores would remain high, or if they were educated about benefits of other academic measurements.

Theme 7: Silence as Resistance

The underlying theme throughout this study has been Silence which is revealed as resistance. Several team members referred to the traumatic experience of a levy failure a few years ago. At all levels, they appeared to fear any turbulence which cause pain within the school community. They alluded to their overall fear of turbulence.

IN: What is the goal of the Board?

R1: To pass levies. I won't hedge. Yeah, I don't think they want to create any controversy at all.

Silence, as previously stated, was used at every level and during design team meetings, staff inservices, and interviews. During design team meetings, the principal asked if someone had made a recommendation to create a new type of student group. (Silence) During a later discussion of double blocking, the principal asked, "So where are we,

Folks. Somebody tell me." (Silence) And, yet, another time, the principal asked, "And this two-day thing?" (Silence) While the researcher initially thought that Silence meant agreement, at no point did the team ever seriously address any issue met with Silence.

During staff inservices, this practice of Silence as resistance became more apparent. The principal and key design team members addressed the agenda of the Inservice Day. Positive input was sought, yet there was no staff reaction. While some kept writing, most staff rarely looked at each other. At a second Staff Inservice nearly a month later, the same reaction occurred after the principal reviewed design team recommendations and asked for input. (Silence) It was only after the staff divided into groups that they voiced their negative reactions to change. Again, little that was proposed was ever accomplished. It appeared that, once again, Silence was translated into resistance by staff.

There were additional examples involving a spouse and the researcher. A staff member apparently showing the amount of extra work spoke at a design team meeting that the spouse wasn't speaking due to the amount of school work done over the Christmas Holidays. Team members appeared to empathize with the staff member. Rather than asking questions, they met her eyes and nodded.

This researcher felt the resistance several times as well. During an interview, the researcher questioned waivers and staff acceptability of them. (Silence) Though the topic was briefly pursued, the Silence persisted and the question was left unanswered. After the second Staff Inservice, during which staff appeared negative towards proposed changes, the researcher found it difficult to determine the design team meeting times. Though

frequently told that the researcher would be kept abreast of meeting changes, subsequent phone calls were not forthcoming and the researcher missed three consecutive design team meetings. Shortly thereafter, as the team focus appeared to take a positive turn, the researcher once again was included.

Though initially viewed by the researcher as agreement, Silence gradually evolved into the researcher's understanding as a form of resistance. This was mainly due to the fact that none of the issues met with Silence was ever addressed. It seemed that resistance was both understood and accepted by the group of participants. In this particular school community culture, Silence appeared to be an effective form of resistance.

Part 3: Summary of Results

In this study, I was interested in learning more about the social relationships of leadership during school restructuring efforts. Upon the completion of the field observations and design team interviews, a review of the recent literature regarding restructuring and leadership was done particularly in the areas of relationships and communication among the principal and staff members. It was determined that the strands of school restructuring and leadership intersect due to the fact that change alters relationships.

It became apparent to me as I observed and interviewed that communication among participants influenced both restructuring and leadership. It appeared that the design team members lacked a vision of the future direction of the school as well as an understanding of what leadership entails in terms of roles and responsibilities. Further, they appeared unaware of the voices of other participants in the school community. The principal, on the

other hand, had a clear sense of both vision and the participants. The following discussion addresses the importance of communication in leadership and restructuring.

Review of the Literature

The review of the literature provided sensitizing concepts regarding the relational aspects of leadership which may help serve as guides when considering leadership in the light of school restructuring efforts, initiation of the change process, and the role of the principal. It also served as a backdrop to better understand the changing role of principal leadership, the ambiguities concerning leadership, and how leadership emerges as reflected through interactions and relationships with staff, administration, students, parents, community members and others.

Two studies highlight the current shift of leadership from a managerial to facilitative role. In the first, Bredeson (1993) examined the role of the principal as well as the role transition process in four school districts undergoing restructuring efforts. His study was based on the assumptions that change is a social process, and restructuring would have a major impact on individuals and their roles. The principals interviewed indicated a trend in the role of principal from manager to facilitator.

The second study explored the role of the principal and the concept of facilitative power and its influence on the behavior of both principals and teachers undergoing restructuring (Goldman, Dunlap & Conley, 1993). Results showed that communication appears to encourage success in restructuring initiatives. That the principal has experienced a shift from a managerial to facilitative role change is evidenced by his words.

PR: I've changed dramatically in how I operate the school. I used to say, "This is what we're gonna do and that's it." Kind of the old-fashioned. Now, I pretty much get input from the masses and we make the decisions now as a group whether it is the design team or faculty. I think we've come a long way in a short period of time. I think we've gotten there because of a lot of dialogue, a lot of discussion.

Two of the themes, Team Positives and Administrative Goals were met with comparable results by both the design team and the principal. The following discussion will address those in which discrepant views were held: 1) Vision and Team Negatives - accountability and commitment, 2) Staff - reaching a critical mass of enthusiasm for change, and 3) Communication.

Vision, Accountability and Commitment

Whether the vision, accountability and commitment of the principal would transfer to the staff was addressed by Hallinger & Hausman (1993) in a four-year longitudinal case study. Evaluating the change in the principal's role during school restructuring, their findings suggested that principals need to retain the role of instructional leader while additionally expanding the role to reshape the school organization. Principals also still needed to play key functions in communicating with their shared governance councils in order to maintain a focus, link to outside resources, and take a broad view of the school. Results of this study concluded that ultimate accountability did not shift from the principals to others. My study supported this finding as design team members did not collaborate in order to develop a shared vision. While accepting the decision-making role, they developed neither a sense of commitment nor one of accountability within their new role. Though the

principal did have a vision, it was his vision. It did not appear to transfer to team members. Neither did his articulated sense of commitment to continue the change process nor the accountability that comes as a result of decision-making transfer.

Critical Mass

Establishing a critical mass of staff enthusiasm and sustaining it was studied by Chenoweth and Kushman (1993) when they viewed initiating and sustaining the change process during school restructuring through field research strategies. They stated initially that "school leaders frequently ignore or often underestimate the importance of building commitment and shared meaning" among participants at the outset of school restructuring initiatives (Chenoweth & Kushman). The goal of this early courtship phase is to begin building a shared meaning and commitment around a particular change model, thus achieving a "critical mass of staff support" (Chenoweth & Kushman, 1993, p. 3). Their findings suggested that efforts were more positively received by staff when the principal communicated a vision as well as an understanding of the change process. The vision should include ideas about the staff's changing roles and the look of classrooms of the future. Findings also showed that when staff were assisted in their understanding of the change process, they were able to convert staff ambiguity, or the fear of change, into a feeling of "fit - something we were already doing" (Chenoweth & Kushman, 1993, p. 26). There is a vision for the school in my study, but it is the principal's vision. Results of this study indicate that the principal should communicate his vision as well as an understanding of the change process. Direct coaching may be necessary for design team and staff members to understand and feel more comfortable with their changing roles as the

principal adopts a more facilitative one.

Communication

With communication, Leithwood (1993) suggested that a sense of community may be developed through the initiation of changes. These may be of a first order referring to structural activities such as testing, or those of second order changes referring to sensitivities such as shared vision, greater sense of community, and decision-making processes (1993). Leithwood also found that leadership attuned to the influence of organizational structure and culture or the meaning people associate with their work and their willingness to risk change may have an influence on school communities undergoing restructuring initiatives. The principal appears aware of the organizational structure, the meaning staff give to their work, and their willingness to risk change, yet the team members and staff appear unclear in each of these areas. It appears that there is a great opportunity here for him to assist in the development of a greater sense of community simply by enlarging the conversation and including the voices of all participants of the school community including staff, students, parents and community members.

Conclusions

The school community which was the focus of my study seemed to generally fit the above description given by Goldman, Dunlap & Conley (1993). First, faculty groups at this school site have become more actively involved in the authority structure through their presence on the design team which consisted of representation from a variety of high school disciplines.

Second, Venture Capital Grant funds have provided resources to buy time for group decision-making. In this case, the Venture Capital funds equate to \$25,000 per year for a five year period. Goldman, Dunlap & Conley (1993) found that the grant proposal process both encouraged a collective vision and established a critical mass of willing participants which ultimately contributed to staff commitment.

Third, team members appreciated the collaboration and supportive nature of the design team, though team members at this site had an unclear shared vision of their school community's future direction. This ambiguity could lead to misunderstandings among participants. A shared vision would assist in ensuring that all design team members were both understanding and communicating the same message to staff, parents, and community members. This would allow for consistency in their sense of direction, and also a shared meaning to emerge among the school community. Commitment to a mutual goal is essential for the accountability in decision-making to be recognized by team members.

Fourth, the design team expressed a readiness to change, though had a generally unclear understanding of other participants' positions on this issue. Communication is vital in both the change process and the structures which are created. A shared meaning evolving from a multitude of community voices would enhance the understanding of all so that they might work in the interests of all. Districts viewed in trouble must initiate changes for their very survival. Schools which are viewed by their communities as good districts seem to take risks when they begin the change process. Their constituents ask, "Why change?" The overwhelming fear of turbulence which may equate

to levy failures may lead to gradual silent changes for fear that the community will resist what the educators know to be necessary research-based innovations which will improve learning for students. Rather than overtly resist change, the fear of turbulence may beget covert actions. Thus, the changes are never made.

Educators undergoing restructuring efforts need to understand that their progress will be monitored by their caring public who feel they have much to lose economically by a school's failure. Therefore, these schools need to engage the larger school community in conversation to establish a collective shared vision and educate the community so that they understand how these changes will improve the school. Enlarging the conversation to all community participants (including parents, community members, students, and others) can only ensure that their concerns are being met and their support will sustain school improvement efforts.

Part 4: Implications for Future Research

The issues addressed in Summary of Results were: 1) Vision and Team Negatives - accountability and commitment, 2) Staff - reaching a critical mass of enthusiasm, and 3) Communication - the fear of turbulence. Future research of leadership must address each of these areas. The vision must be a shared one that is understood by all participants. Strategies should be developed in order to accomplish this goal. Staff goals also should be understood by all. Further research is necessary to ascertain how the school community might reach a critical mass of enthusiastic participants. Finally, the underlying theme of communication needs to be addressed through future research. Moving from managerial

to facilitative leadership involves a focus on communication. Techniques need to be developed to assist participants in school communities to communicate in more effective ways.

My study presents two voices - the voice of the principal, and the voice of the design team members. Ideally there should be only one voice. To the extent that current school reform and restructuring efforts emphasize the communication aspect of facilitative leadership, the perceptions of the principal and design team members should integrate and emerge as one. Further research should explore strategies to assist the occurrence of this synthesis.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Potential questions to be asked of each Advisory Team member:

General Information

1. How long have you been in this school?
2. Tell me about the school.
3. Tell me about the community.

Design Team

4. Tell me about your experience with the Design Team.
5. Tell me about your experience with restructuring.
6. Tell me about how the staff feels about restructuring.
7. What about the restructuring efforts have you enjoyed?
8. What about the restructuring efforts have you disliked?
9. In your opinion, should the restructuring continue? What suggestions or advice would you give that you think would make restructuring better?
10. What financial considerations might there be to restructuring?
11. What are your feelings regarding restructuring, in general?

Goals

12. Tell me about the various goals within the school system

- a) the staff?
- b) the Design Team?
- c) the principal?
- d) the superintendent?
- e) the Board of Education?
- f) the community?